

# *Margaret and Joe*

Words & Music: Pat Drummond

For Margaret and Joe Di Mamiel and Family

Dateline: Cowra NSW 18/11/89

**This story was collected in Cowra and is the story of a Leeton couple's courageous fight for the life of their five year old daughter Emma who was afflicted with a brain tumour. Their struggle finished tragically but I do not believe it to have been futile. It stands, in my opinion, as a shining example of what parenthood is really all about. In an age where children are increasingly regarded as an inconvenience or, more sinisterly, as a source of income, our 'most precious national resource' is under serious threat. Suicide now forms one of the principle causes of death among young men; and homelessness, once the province of the old and derelict, is now endemic among our youth. While many people can't even be bothered to talk to their children, this couple sold their house and their business, everything that they owned in fact, to raise the outrageous amount of money demanded by the international company, whose prototype drug was Emma's last chance for life. This song is a tribute, humbly offered.**

**It's a long way back to Leeton for Margaret and Joe.**

**They left there, broke and beaten, eighteen months ago.**

**They left their home, and all they owned,**

**to make the company price**

**of a drug that was their final hope to save their daughter's life.**

**Chorus: They had to fight the Government;**

**They had to fight the bills;**

**they had to fight their own despair as she grew ill.**

**They had to fight the sorrow**

**in the older children's eyes;**

**and finally find the strength to say goodbye.**

**I met them up in Cowra, with some family and friends.**

**Working the Railway Pub; starting out again.**

**Joe told me the story as we shared a pint of brown**

**and I couldn't help but thinking that the world was upside down.**

**Where homeless kids sleep out at night beset by wind and water,  
and abortion rates in all the states are climbing every quarter;  
where couples put off having kids for sake of bricks and mortar;  
these people gave up everything for love of one small daughter.**

**Chorus:**

**They're the parents of the year.**

**It doesn't matter that the world will never hear.**

**Their lives were shattered on the day the angel closed her eyes  
and drifted away to paradise**

**but I could see it shining in their eyes like a beacon through the tears.**

**They value Love because they know it's price.**

**They're the Parents of the Year.**

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